SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals upon Current Topics-Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

WHAT IS A NATION WITHOUT A NAVY?

From the N. Y. Heraid.

The aim of every civilized nation is greatness and a desire to outstrip other nations in power. In this respect nations differ but little from individuals, who, no matter how comfortable and happy they may be on comparatively small means, are never satisfied until they are on an equality if not ahead of the society around them. When a nation has made itself great in commerce, in railroads, in public buildings, in literature, and in the arts, it has the elements of strength; but if it has no military or naval power, it cannot be respected like other nations of equal pretensions. Its citizens having amassed wealth flock to foreign parts, as ours do now to the continent of Europe, to spend among strangers a portion of the money they have accumulated. Although they may be treated with courtesy, on account of their wealth, they find that there is a certain kind of deference they do not receive-viz., that accorded to representatives of a nation not powerful only on account of the emoluments above mentioned, but on account of its fighting or aggressive power, which will always command respect in all parts of the world.

Whatever may be our military power-and we have had proof of its greatness-it does not extend beyond our own shores. It is manifest that our power is more than ample to protect us from invasion, and we know that any foes would but leave their bones to bleach upon our shores. This fact is not, however, felt beyond the limits of our own country. Foreigners abroad see nothing that indicates the actual power of the United States. They get sight of our national vessels so seldom that they naturally infer that we are no naval power at all, and judge that, no matter how large an army we can raise, it would be of little utility against any other country without a navy to cover and protect it. Mexico can raise large armies, yet what nation respects or fears her, for she has no navy? What would the army of England be without her navy? No one would fear it. What hordes of soldiers the Chinese and Japanese can raise, yet who fears them? And how easily a few heavy ships of the European powers keep the naturally lawless authorities of those nations in subjection. While the flag of England or of France is in sight on those Asiatic coasts the coasts the coasts the committed on the subjects of

either power, while the prestige of their armies carries no weight whatever, because it is known that they cannot reach those shores without great trouble and vast expense, and would then be opposed by immensely supe-

rior numbers.

It is, then, after all, a navy that indicates the power of a nation abroad. No nation can be great that is not powerful in commerce, agriculture, railroads, literature, and the arts, for in all these lie the resources from which a large navy springs. We have all these resources, but yet we are not a powerful nation in the actual meaning of the term; for we have not the quality of selfprotection. We cannot at a moment's notice redress an injury or demand reparation for an injustice to our citizens who may be op-pressed abroad. We have resources which in time would enable us to take measures to redeem our honor, but it would require so long to do it that the merit would all be lost. In the meantime we should suffer in the estimation of the world as a man would in the estimation of society who spends a year practising with a pistol before challenging a

person for a palpable insult. When British subjects were imprisoned and ill-treated in Abyssinia, Great Britain never stopped to count the cost. She had the power already at command, and it cost her but little more to put it in motion than to keep it lying idle, and she at once proceeded to relieve her subjects, who but for this timely aid would have fallen victims to the brutality of a savage ruler. What would the United States have done under similar circumstances? We should have talked bombshells and grapeshot, and after getting a few canal boats ready, and spending a year in preparation, we should have settled down to the conviction that we should not make a demand that we were not capable of enforcing. We are pretty much in that condition now. Was there ever a nation that had greater grounds of complaint against another than we have against England? She inflicted on us the greatest injury she possibly could. She destroyed our commerce and deprived us of one of the great sources of national wealth. She sent her fleets upon our coast during the rebellion to protect her subjects and to see that we complied strictly with all the laws of blockade, and that it was not, like many of her own blockades, a "paper" affair. It was humiliating to us to see the heavy ships of our ancient enemy sailing in among our extemporized men-of-war, instructing us in our duties and cautioning us how we invaded any of the rights of the British lion. Here was England looking after her commerce-her great source of power. Lawless as the business was in which her commercial vessels were engaged, England was true to her traditional policy of protecting them at all hazards. They were only permitted to be molested in casts where their violation of all law was so palpable that England herself, from whom the laws emanated, could not interfere without drawing down upon herself the reproaches of all mankind. She did, however, protect and encourage her commerce in its efforts to help the Rebellion and she also brought her power to bear in pretecting the Rebel cruisers when they were assisting her by destroying our commerce.

will push matters to the verge of war without Let us, then, have a navy, and we shall see England under another character. She will

Had we had a navy of suitable vessels during

the Rebellion our commerce, which once

equalled that of England, would now have

been one-third greater than it was, for we

should have been not only able to shut the

Alabamas up in foreign ports and catch them

if they ventured to emerge from their shelter,

but we could have said, to England "Stop this

piracy or we will make reprisals on your

We all know how much English merchants

dread a war with this country. They are

aware, from the results of the Alabama's

cruise, what damage twenty such vessels

from them during a three years' war, which

commerce, which we have the power to do.

condition we can justly claim the title of a great nation, but that can only be when we have the necessary fighting power affoat,

THE ANSWER OF FRANCE.

From the N. Y. Tribune. The result of the election in France on Sunday is for Napoleon at the same time a victory and a defeat. For twenty years he has tried to cover successive usurpations with a transparent veil of popular suffrage. It was in the outraged name of 7,000,000 voters that he justified the crime of December, 1851; it was again by the farce of a forced election that he sought absolution for the murders of 1852. He has never ceased to style himself the choice of the French people; he has never ceased to implore their favor, and beg them, not for obedience, because that he could enforce, but for a pledge of confidence in him-self and fealty to his dynasty. At every trial he has encountered rebuff, and the last rebuff is the worst of all. Of the actual result of Sunday's balloting there has never been any doubt. Elections under Napoleon can never go against the Government. But no exer-tions have been spared to secure a grand majority that by its moral effect should depress the party of freedom and strengthen the foundations of that throne which awaits the Fourth Napoleon-if a Fourth Napoleon there is ever to be. Eugenie on her knees before the altar, and battalions on guard around the polls, alike be-sought Providence for an affirmative vote. Police spies filled the air with the horrors of imaginary plots, republicans by the score were thrown into jail on fictitious charges, liberal newspapers were suppressed on the eve of election, liberal soldiers were drafted off to Algeria, and all the cunning devices of a despotic power were employed to fill the timid with a fear of avowing democratic sen-timents, and the selfish and uncertain with dread of socialist designs which had no existence. Ollivier at the same time addressed an appeal to his "dearfellow-citizens," setting forth the horrors of revolutions. "Do not listen," he cried, "to those who would counsel you to vote 'ne.' If they were to be tri-umphant on the 8th of May, they would take vengeance, they would imprison and exile, they would establish the social republic, they would assail the rich. If on the contrary our friends should triumph, a long period of security, confidence, and peace would be assured to us. Relieved from constitutional discussions, from interpellations, threats of disturtances, prophecies of revolution, the Experor and his ministers will be able to occupy themselves with even more solicitude than heretofore in finding means to improve the position of these who possess nothing without violating the rights of those who have property, and we shall not have to fear those times of civil war when sons, instead of closing the eyes of their fathers, have their own eyes closed by their parents." No one who knows the French people can doubt that in the provinces the influence of such terrorism and such appeals must have been enormous. It is in the provinces that ignorance and vice abound and voters are most readily swayed by fear or favors. In our country it is to the rural population that we trust for the honest and enlightened expression of the popular will; in France it is Paris and a few other large cities which embody nearly all the education, the strength, and the moral force of the country. In Paris the majority against the plebiscitum has been overwhelming; in the whole empire Napoleon's majority, in spite of official counting, seems from present returns to fall far below the figures he obtained at the beginning of his reign; and, though by actual enumeration of ballots his measure has been carried, the real answer which France returns to the question whether she approves his past course and his plans for the future is an unmistakable No.

We suppose Napoleon must have anticipated this result: we cannot doubt that he will interpret if in his own manner, and take it as a carte blanche for whatever measures of personal government he may have in contemplation. Still it must be a bitter sorrow. He feels that his reign is drawing to a close, and the darling object of his ambition, the restoration of the Napoleonic dynasty, is further from realization now than it was ten years ago. Old age, the sickness that knows no cure, is creeping upon him; the sins of a misspent youth are wreaking vengeance upon his wasted body; the friends in whom he trusted have one by one been taken from him; St. Arnaud, the agent of the coup d'etat; Pelissier, the inexorable soldier, De Morny, Walewski, Marshal Niel, the soul of the army, the only man perhaps who could have insured the succession of the Prince Imperial had Napoleon been suddenly taken off-all these are dead; and what has the Emperor in his age and sickness to look for? Eugenie has given no proof of ability; Prince Napoleon, "the Red Prince," is not to be trusted, for he has more than once bid unmistakably for the succession in his own name. Even the army, though on Sunday it swarmed over the barricades and crushed the feeble protest of the liberal party, has cast an unexpectedly heavy vote against the plebiscitum. As a last resource the Emperor appeals to France, and France sullenly turns away.

THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE HOUR. From the N. Y. Standard. The May anniversaries, which begun with the celebration of the American Seaman's Friend Society at Association Hall, seem point to the present moment as a fitting time to review the Christianity of the hour. The historian of the future will be compelled to rely upon the newspapers of the present for most of his information in regard to the social and religious condition of the people of our time. Perhaps the index thus preserved may point unerringly to the state of the Christian life and teaching in this era, but the picture that must be painted from this reflex of the passing hour will not prove a flattering one. The quality of the auditory takes precedence over the words of divine wisdom which fell upon the ears of the listening multitudes. Everywhere the desire for sensations in sermonizing, for music rendered with almost the elaboration of the lyric stage. for displays of drapery and dress in rivalry of an evening at the opera, are sought for and commented on, and delighted in; while the worship of the Most High is a merely subsidiary matter, retained because it is useful in giving to the stage effects of our churches a

could inflict upon their property if let loose upon it. They know how their manufactomore brilliant setting.
In the churches of this city, on Sunday last, those which are described as "fashionries would be crushed if our custom was taken able" are represented as filled to overflowing, while those which are without fashionable would infliet such damage as would result in appointments, and where the worshippers a revolution in England. But England, knowrefrain from a mere display of silk attire, are ing her strength and our inability to do her injury for want of a respectable naval force, omparatively empty. At the Church of Our Saviour the congregation was not overthe fear of our taking any steps to vindicate crowded, nor fashionable, nor yet sparse; our honor as a nation. which is not to be wondered at when it is remembered that the Rev. Mr. Pullman is bold enough to paint Solomon as a "practical willingly divide the commerce of the world liar," and can declare, in so many words, with us when she finds us in a position to that the recent calamity at Richmond was not maintain our rights. When we are in that due to the hand of God, but to a rotten | before the Royal Society in 1798, hailstones

girder. About thirty persons gathered to hear the Rev. Beverly Betts, at the Church of the Holy Light, his discourse being not merely on things temporal, but on things eternal as well; while the Second Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church was crowded to its fullest capacity, it having been announced that the Rev. Mr. Steele, the pastor, would preach on the Richardson-McFarland tragedy. The "extraordinary persecutions" of the Rev. Mr. Smythe, of "gin-and-milk" fame, served to gather a large congregation, and the as-semblage was rewarded by some allusion to the new drink, which owes its general intro-duction to the indiscreet wender of an unsophisticated reporter. The assemblage at Lyric Hall, where the Rev. Mr. Frothingham preaches, "was of the usual intellectual character," and "the music was exquisitely rendered in that subdued tone which is rarely found in our fashionable churches." But the Rev. Mr. Frothingham's church is very far behind the Rev. Mr. Hepworth's in its musical features. That great religious news-paper, the New York Herald, is in ecstacies about the music in the Church of the Messiah, and even gives a theological tinge to its descriptions, as will be seen in the following

music, that great modern auxiliary to fashionable Christian worship in our great modern religious temples, was very fine—that artistic music congenial to the austhetic tastes of the congregation meeting here—the music while bearing aloft on the wings of noble song the tired out and fagged soul, made so by the bitter experience of our rough every-day life and its trials, giving inspiration to hope and to duty the impulse of ennobling purposes; the music that, as much as prayer and sermon, has really as good and Christianizing effect upon church

After this one need not be surprised on being told by a "journalist," who without doubt is regular in his attendance on the ministrations of the Gospel, that "a more brilliant sermon has not been preached by the Rev. George H. Hepworth since assuming pastoral charge of the church." In opposition to all this is a remark of Father O'Reilly, at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, that all that is wanting now-a-days is a fashionable church and a preacher to tickle the ears of his hearers with arguments against the existence of a hell, and proofs that everybody is certain of going to heaven. But we have here the peculiar circumstances and conditions under which the anniversaries are to be

observed this year. The Christianity of the hour "improves" each passing scandal, feeds the prurient curiosity of the multitude, and for every sin that is revamped in the pulpit makes room for a thousand crimes. The dangers of this recent sensationalism are important subjects for consideration at the religious anniversaries which occur during the present week. The clergy may rely upon it that so long as their sermons find a place in the columns of the daily press as interesting reading matter, so long will their work be essentially bad. If they eradicate the evil, they may make the newspapers less interesting, but they will accomplish a great good.

GRANT AND PHILADELPHIA. From the N. Y. World. In the controversy which, if it did not break forth, was certainly imminent, as to the duty of the remodelled Supreme Court on the legal-tender question, no organ of public opinion was more steady on the side of hon-esty and law than the Public Ledger of Philadelphia. It now, naturally enough, takes credit for its sagacity and integrity. "The Ledger always comes out right." It had the great advantage too of being, as it were, the organ of the Federal reporter, who, hailing from Philadelphia, naturally enough put himself in communication with his own newspaper, and whose news, being semi-official, was very greedily devoured. But there was a time when the reporter must have trembled and the Ledger was awed to silence, and that was the moment when Mr. Attorney-General, representing of course the President, made his unexpected appearance on the scene, and demanded a hearing of some of the cases which had been passed. This had not been counted on; and, although the Ledger had talked very ominously about certain delinquent corporations, yet neither it nor Mr. Wallace, the reporter, dreamed that these corporations would be unscrupulous and powerful enough to seduce the Executive into this act of wrong. Then was it they trembled and were silent. It is all idle to pretend that the Executive has not influence with the court. It has. Judges who have "just kissed hands" on their appointment may be pardoned for looking in the direction the Presidential fingers point. In this case they did, and obeyed, at least in the initial step. Nowhere, we may be permitted to say, is the influence of the Executive, socially, more powerful than in the good city of Phi ladelphia. At its dinner-tables secretaries are made, without the slightest reference to their fitness or political position. These honors are bought and furnished and given. Thither go invitations to the White House, in grateful return for summer drives and temperance dinners at Long Branch; and hence is it then, when Mr. Grant, in a way not to be mistaken, makes his imperial wishes known that the legaltender decision should be reversed, it was that our friends in that region were mute or mildly murmured dissent. Nor are we aware that a word of condemnation of this Executive intrusion has yet been uttered. Neither do we know-and this we have a right to, as a matter of financial news affecting large interests-what course the discomfited corporations of Pennsylvania have of late concluded to take. They failed in the raid round the State sinking fund and in the flank movement on the Federal judiciary. The Ledger well says that there is for them "but one course, and that is to pay in gold, for the law requires it." We fear they will do nothing of the kind; for, backed up by high authority, and careless of the ruin and hardships of those about them, they may determine "to fight it out upon their line all summer," and take the chances of ultimate success. We shall be glad to know if the great corporation of Pennsylvania has obeyed the law, withdrawn its contingent certificates, and paid its April interest in gold. Pennsylvania is a rebellious Commonwealth. Its revolt from Great Britain was prompt and earnest. It went nigh unto the death for whisky. There were armed traitors once in Northampton. It had a buck-shot war; and now we see one set of its corpora-

promote public credit. HAIL STORMS.

tions asking the State courts to enjoin the

collectors of Federal revenue, and another proclaiming open defiance to the Federal judiciary. All of which is not calculated to

From the N. Y. Times. The great hail storm in Philadelphia on Sunday was in some respects remarkable, and did much damage, but it has often been far exceeded in violence and destructiveness. In Jackson, La., in 1834, a fall of hail not only beat down houses and trees, but killed numbers of cattle, although it lasted for only nine minutes. During a storm in Germany, described by the Abbe Maury, in a paper read

was found that weighed fourteen pounds, and that one at least passed through the roof of a house. Heyne's grave statement that a hail-stone fell in India during the reign of Tippoo that was of the size of an elephant, is incredible, but that there have been many hail-stones large enough to destroy the life of either men or animals is certain. During the early days of California there was a story of a hail-storm having killed every person in a little mining camp in the mountains save one poor fellow, who escaped, much bruised and hurt, to tell the tale. Some meteerologists have supposed that ships have been sunk by the sudden weight of these frozen missiles, and that catastrophes attributed to contact with mountains of ice have indeed been caused by that substance, but coming from a vertical rather than a lateral direction.

Fortunately for mankind, hail-storms are commonly not only limited in duration, but confined to very moderate areas. That which visited Philadelphia does not seem to have been heard of elsewhere. The great French storm of 1788, considered, we believe, the most severe on record, extended in two parallel lines-one of five hundred, the other of six hundred miles in length; but the mean breadth of each was only nine miles, and this instance is accounted altogether upusual and phenomenal. Sudden changes of weather, it would appear, ought, philosophically speak. ing, to produce these storms, since they are occasioned by the rapid freezing of the water held in suspension in a warm current of air on contact with a cold current in a higher region. Still, although our climate is so changeable, and the thermometer so swiftly capricious, especially in the spring-and although the hail-storms are in general more frequent in temperate than in tropical regions—we seem to escape with a very small proportion of them. Other regions where the temperature is much more equable, the south of France for instance, are on the other hand much oftener exposed to these visitations. Our comparative immunity on the Atlantic coast is perhaps due to the ab-sence of lofty mountains, which are found to be strongly conducive to the formation of

GENERAL FREMONT'S RAILROAD-A FAIR SHOW FOR THE GREAT PIO-

From the N. Y. Sun. We are glad to learn that the modest request of General John C. Fremont for the right of way for his railroad-the Southern Transcontinental-is likely to be granted by Congress at its present session.

General Fremont was the great pioneer in transcontinental travel, already so important, and bound within the present generation to increase a thousand fold. His name is inseparably and imperishably connected with the very idea of overland communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific. And now he comes before the American Congress and modestly asks that he may have the right of way across such of the lands as belong to the United States Government, for the construction of a railway. He asks no subsidythough enormous subsidies have been given to others—but only the right of way, with a reasonable appropriation of public lands, which are now uninhabited and worthless.

If a distinction was to be made in favor of any one, if a subsidy was to be granted to wbody it should have been to the great explorer, who suffered inconceivable hardships, privation, want, hunger, thirst, and cold, and incurred great danger in finding out the then trackless way from the Eastern to the Western coast, which he now wishes to bind together with iron. But General Fremont makes no request for a subsidy, no request for the money or the bonds of the Government, but merely asks for the chance the room-to construct a great national improvement, together with a sufficient grant of land to enable him to build the road.

The right of way-with a munificent appropriation of land-has already been obtained from the great and fertile State of Texas. So it has also from the Territory of

Now what is wanted to complete the route is only a reasonable grant from the United States of lands still belonging to the Government. We hope the grant will promptly be made. It will enure to the wealth of the nation, and it will be an act of justice to the great explorer who is the President of the

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